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C O N F I D E N T I A L SECTION 01 OF 02 BAGHDAD 001573

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TAGS: [PGOV](#) [KDEM](#) [PNAT](#) [IZ](#)

SUBJECT: DPM CANDIDATE ZAWBI'E SAYS VIOLENCE GROWING

Classified By: Ambassador Zalmay Khalilzad for reasons 1.4 (b) and (d).

11. (C) SUMMARY: The Tawafuq nominee for Deputy Prime Minister Salam Zakum Ali Fadhi Al-Zawbi'e told Ambassador Khalilzad on May 8 that bloodshed and terrorism in Iraq are growing in a noticeable way. According to Zawbi'e however, the security situation is not terminal, and, if he is given the authority, the Ministries of Interior and Defense can deal with these issues. Zawbi'e claimed that many insurgents are from his tribe and that, when they see that the US plans to leave Iraq, they will put down their arms. He characterized managing the security file as the Deputy Prime Minister as a humanitarian duty. END SUMMARY.

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THE MAJOR ISSUES - IRAN, ZARKAWI, BA'THISTS  
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12. (C) The Tawafuq nominee for Deputy Prime Minister with responsibility for services and the PM-designate's "deputy" to the new National Security Council Salam Zakum Ali Fadhi Al-Zawbi'e told Ambassador Khalilzad on May 8 that bloodshed and terrorism in Iraq are growing in a noticeable way. He said that Sunni Arabs are terrified at what they see in the MOI. People exposed to weapons and attacks will resist, he explained. Zawbi'e assured the Ambassador that, once the government violence is fixed and people see that the Coalition will leave Iraq, they will lay down their arms.

13. (C) According to Zawbi'e, the three major issues in Iraq are Iran, Zarqawi, and the Ba'athists. The Iranians and their Iraqi allies (SCIRI and the Badr Corps) are pursuing a political vision and program rooted in the past and not based on reality, he argued, adding that this program will be a big problem if it grows. Zawbi'e called Zarqawi an opportunist who is exploiting the huge unemployment in Sunni Arab regions. Once Iraq has a strong government, Zawbi'e predicted, Zarqawi will be isolated from the Iraqi people and will leave Iraq. Zawbi'e said the Ba'athists are a cartoon threat - 80% of them have left Iraq.

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ON THE SHIA COALITION  
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14. (C) Zawbi'e said that he is convinced that the rise of the Jaysh al-Mahdi is a largely economic and security phenomenon that will diminish as the government asserts itself. He asserted that Muqtada al-Sadr is not dynamic or thoughtful enough to lead a real sustained popular movement. Zawbi'e said that he believes that SCIRI serves as Iran's "eyes and ears" in Iraq and is the most worrisome of Shia political entities. By contrast, he opined, "The Da'wa Party is good. They are a clean movement untied to Iran, and we can work with them."

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ON THE TAWAFUQ FRONT  
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15. (C) Zawbi'e said that he is a committed member of the Tawafuq front but regrets the religious politics that have propelled the list to the fore. He objects to the Iraqi Islamic Party in principle because he opposes the use of religion as a political tool. He described the National Dialogue Council as a collection of Salafists. On the other hand, he sees the General Conference of the Iraqi People as an intellectual and secular group led by patriotic Iraqi leaders. He said that Adnan Duleimi is "abrasive" on the surface but a reasonable and moderate leader underneath. Zawbi'e regrets that it has taken so much effort to make the elderly Duleimi understand that he is not fit to assume a senior government post.

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ON THE HEWAR FRONT  
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16. (C) Zawbi'e was dismissive of Salih Mutlaq and his political allies, particularly Hassan Zeidan al-Luheibi. The Hewan Front, Zawbi'e observed, was formed in an effort to revive the Ba'ath Party. That effort failed, he said. The best tactic with these leaders is to ignore them, he argued; the Sunni Arab community is not behind them. Mutlaq would not make a suitable Foreign Minister and could even remain in opposition, he noted. Zawbi'e said that enfranchising the Ba'athists is not a strategy for combating the insurgency because he believes that much of the Sunni Arab street -- and the insurgency -- is anti-Ba'athist.

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BIO NOTE  
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17. (C) Zawbi'e said that he takes pride in never having joined the Ba'ath Party, a stance that put him under scrutiny and suspicion under the former regime. He claimed that the Sunni Arab community had celebrated Saddam's downfall but has since been bitterly disappointed by what has followed. Zawbi'e said that he served for several years on the front in northern Iraq during the Iran-Iraq war as a junior officer; his specialty at the time was armor. Zawbi'e considers the Iranian government to be "a source of great evil." He is married with three children, two boys and one girl. His eldest son is around 12 years old and is named Ahmad. His wife is a practicing dentist. Zawbi'e was born and lives in the Karkh neighborhood of Baghdad. He is from a clan of the Zawbi'e tribe that is different from that of Ulema Council leader Harith al-Dari, another Zawbi'e tribe member.

18. (C) Zawbi'e (also spelled Zuba'i) was born in 1959 in Baghdad. He obtained his BSc in Soil Physics in 1982 and his MSc in Soil Fertility in 1988 from the University of Basra. He got his PhD from the Soil Department at the Agriculture College of the University of Baghdad in 2000. He worked as the al-N'amiya forests development project director from 1990-92 and as Director of the al-Thirhar Poultry Company from 1993-97. Zawbi'e has been a lecturer at the University of Anbar since 2000.  
KHALILZAD